

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant	: Schwarze, et al.	Art Unit	: 3625
Serial No.	: 10/676,378	Examiner	: Jason B. Dunham
Filed	: September 30, 2003	Conf. No.	: 3243
Title	: INTERFACE FOR GENERATING BUSINESS PARTNERS		

MAIL STOP AF

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

REPLY TO DECEMBER 5, 2007 FINAL ACTION

In the Office Action mailed December 5, 2007, all pending claims 1-42 remain rejected, and the rejection was made final. Claims 1-42 remain pending. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the finality of the rejection, and allowance of all pending claims. Applicants submit that claims 1-42 are in condition for allowance.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC 102 and 103

Claims 1-3, 6-8, 15-17, 20-22, 29-31 and 34-36 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as anticipated by Cheyer (US 2003/0046201). Of these, claims 1, 15 and 29 are independent claims. The remaining dependent claims 4-5, 9-14, 18-19, 23-28, 32-33 and 37-42 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cheyer in view of other references.

Applicants maintain their previously advanced position that each of the pending independent claims 1, 15 and 29 defines subject matter that is patentable over Cheyer, as do the pending dependent claims.

As previously submitted by Applicants with respect to the method claim 1, Cheyer does not disclose or suggest, as recited in claim 1, a method of importing supplier information for use by a purchasing computing system, which method includes all of the following in combination: “establishing connection with an external service provider that includes a directory of suppliers and information relating to the suppliers,” “sending a request ... identifying a user-selected one of the suppliers included in the directory,” “receiving a response ... including information relating to the selected supplier,” and “parsing the information in the received response,” and

“creating a new business partner entry for the selected supplier in a directory that is usable by the purchasing computing system.”

More specifically, Cheyer does not disclose or suggest, as required by Applicants' claim 1, “sending a request from the purchasing computer system and to the external service provider,” wherein the request identifies a user-selected one of suppliers included in a directory that is included in the external service provider. In addition, Cheyer does not disclose or suggest, as again required by Applicants' claim 1, “receiving a response from the external service provider and at the purchasing computer system,” wherein the response includes information relating to the selected supplier. Finally, Cheyer does not disclose or suggest, as required by Applicants' claim 1, “parsing the information received in the response,” and “creating, using the information parsed from the response, a new business partner entry for the selected supplier in a directory that is usable by the purchasing computing system.”

The Examiner's reliance on paragraph 36 and Figure 5 of Cheyer in the response to arguments section of the final action falls short. In paragraph 36 of Cheyer, there is disclosed a process in which a service coordination advisor 308 (implemented by a service selection wizard 310) specifies “how the appropriate service provider should be selected to accomplish a task in the process flow,” and further discloses that “the user [that is, the user of the design time process] may select a preferred provider at design time.” Even though Cheyer thus discloses user selection of a supplier in a directory, Cheyer falls well short of disclosing or suggesting what Applicants have claimed in claim 1. In particular, Cheyer fails to disclose or suggest sending a request that identifies a user-selected one of the suppliers, and sending that request “from the purchasing computing system and to the external service provider,” as recited in Applicants claim 1.

Even if one were to consider the service coordination advisor 308 to be the claimed “purchasing computer” of Applicants' claim 1 (or to consider that advisor 308 is part of a purchasing computer), Cheyer's directory is not, as claim 1 requires, one that is included in an external service provider (that is, a service provider that is external of the claimed “purchasing computer”). Conversely, even if one were to consider Cheyer's component in which Cheyer's directory resides to be the claimed “external service provider,” Cheyer does not have both 1) a

“purchasing computing system” and 2) an “external service provider” in which the directory is included, as Applicants’ claims require.

Cheyer’s Figure 5 also falls short. The Examiner contends that “the process in figure 5 of Cheyer allows for creation of a new business partner entry by registering and adding descriptive material regarding the business.” (Page 7 of Action.) While this may be true, that again falls short of what Applicants have claimed. In particular, Applicants have claimed in claim 1 that the same system – namely, the purchasing computing system – that sends the request to the external service provider with the supplier directory also is the system for which the business partner entry is created as specified later in Applicants’ claim. In other words, the method of Applicants’ claim 1 is a method of “importing supplier information” as the preamble of Applicants’ claim states and as the body of the claim bears out. That is not true with the process in Cheyer’s Figure 5. There, the directory is accessed, and then information in that same directory can be added or edited. There is no importation of information from an external service provider to a purchasing system, as Applicants have claimed, and moreover, there is no parsing of information and creating a new business partner entry from the parsed information, as there is required to be with Applicants’ claim 1. Indeed, Cheyer simply discloses the unremarkable feature of there being a directory of suppliers that can be accessed and updated.

Accordingly, Cheyer does not disclose or suggest the subject matter of claim 1. In addition, the references cited in connection with various dependent claims do not overcome the deficiencies of Cheyer vis-à-vis claim 1. As such, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 1-14 be withdrawn.

Independent claim 15 is directed to an article, and independent claim 29 is directed to a system. Claims 15 and 29 are patentable over Cheyer and other cited references for the reasons discussed above in connection with claim 1, as are dependent claims 16-28 and 30-42. As such, Applicants also request that the rejection of claims 15-42 be withdrawn.